



IVY LEAVES JOURNAL  
OF LITERATURE & ART

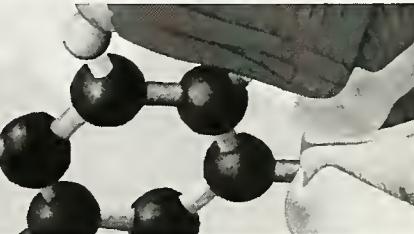
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So fly away—fly away,  
Before I find words to say  
For this beauty was made  
Not for the creases of a page  
Not for the bare hand to hold  
Not for the naked eye to see  
Only to fly far from me.

- JAKE DUNN, FROM "A GLIMPSE"

# IVY LEAVES JOURNAL



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# OF LITERATURE & ART



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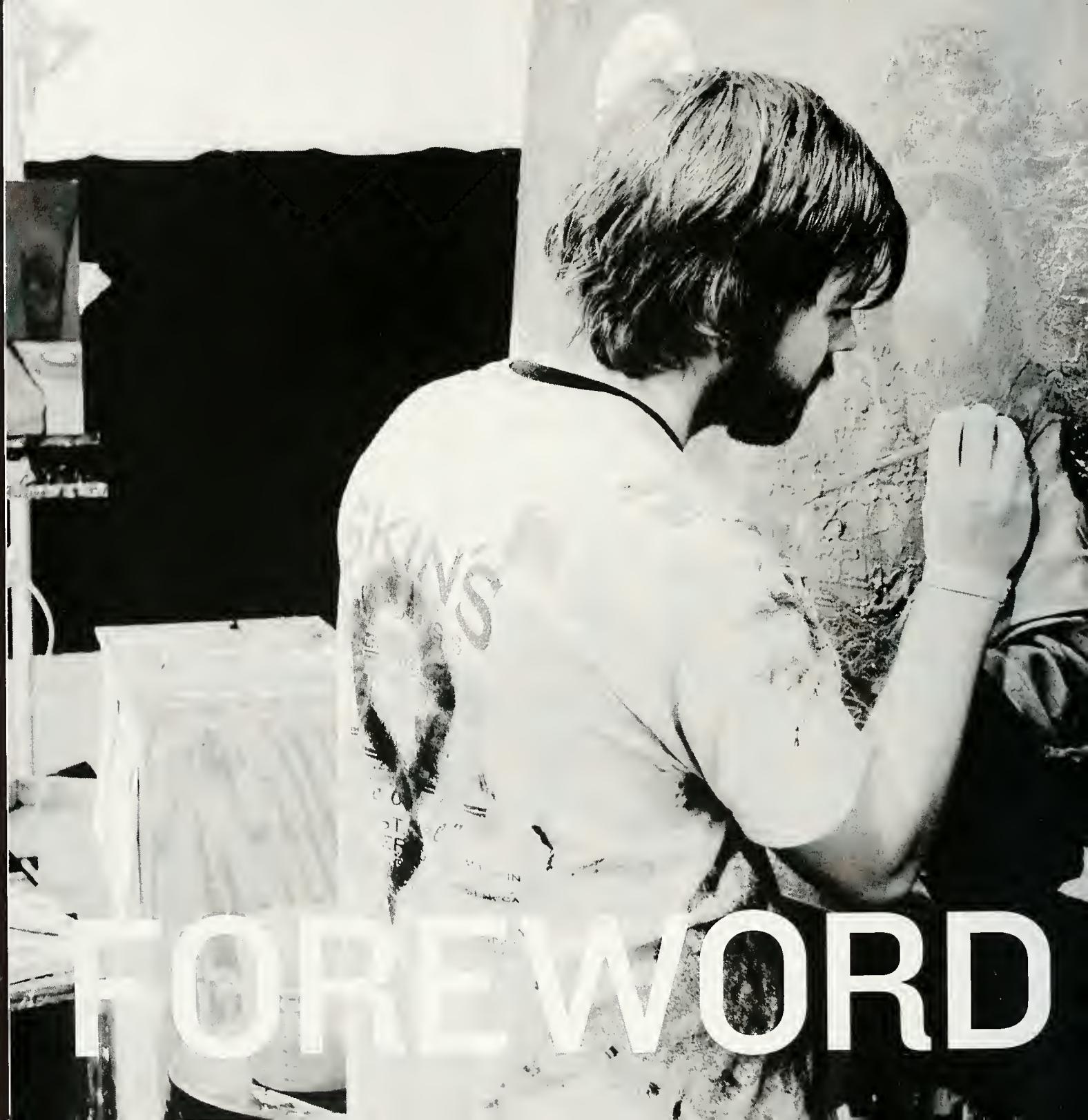
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WORD



As we selected literature for our eighty-fifth volume of *Ivy Leaves*, we found ourselves on the trail of one reoccurring question: Can beauty be captured? In their pursuit of beauty, our selections find it—in joy, in resignation, in age, and in youth—in little honesties of human experience that become a prism reflecting the varied spectrum of our humanity. The work in this year's journal exposes small epiphanies, illuminating moments, when men choose the sea or recollect a mother “spinning in a circle, there in the front yard, laughing at herself”; when a young woman discovers heroism in her mother's midwifery, when little boys discover a moon in a garden puddle, when adolescent girls strive to accomplish in ballet and in life what cannot be achieved in either, perfection. Moments of grace arrive and fly quickly, but in that flash they allow us to see and understand ourselves and each other differently and anew.

This year, in addition to poetry and fiction, we include creative nonfiction, a genre that speaks concretely from lived experience but, like poetry and fiction, shapes the jumble of life's raw material into meaningful patterns, from textiles and South Carolina history to ghosts and Anderson University's long-held romance with Anna, a young woman who may or may not have lived or died and may or may not walk still the halls of the Sullivan Building. And this time, too, we're introducing as our featured writer a longtime contributor to *Ivy Leaves*, a neighbor and friend of Anderson University, Margaret B. Hayes. We trust you will enjoy her poetry and be touched by it, as we hope you will be touched by all the poetry, fiction, nonfiction, and visual art that we are proud to present here.

*The Editors*

## JUST SHELLS

BY MARGARET B. HAYES

A snake-like rattle of shells  
in a discarded sandwich bag—  
questions without answers  
closed up inside.

Spiritless shells are all they are.  
What they were drifted away,  
like our first moments  
of discovery, and

because I cannot  
cast them aside,  
I hold them in my hand,  
the sound haunting,  
like nothing ever happened.



ART HISTORY IS DEAD BY WES FRAZER

## NICOLE

BY LINDSEY YINGST

Pale thin limbs  
straining, reaching,  
trembling with the impossible effort  
of trying to obtain perfection  
and, achieving that,  
to reach farther still.

Pink tights bagging  
around bony knees,  
brown hair pulled back  
into a tight bun  
so severe it pulls taut  
the skin of her face.

She bites her lip,  
sucks in her stomach,  
muscles of her acne-sprinkled back  
pulled taut, maintaining form,  
counting, keeping rhythm,  
instructing herself—

Don't look down.

Twelve years old,  
old enough to care,  
to strive with all she has  
for the ever-illusive goal  
of flawlessness,  
too young yet to realize  
her efforts come to nothing.



**KETTLE** ANDREW MASSON

# THE GLORIOUS DEPARTURE OF UNCLE CARL

BY CHARLIE BALLEW

The minister's monotone echoed around the large chapel, the acoustics of the building carrying and echoing back each syllable so that it never completely died until the minister had moved another four or five words into the eulogy. It hadn't been immediately obvious when everyone had been waved into silence and the funeral proper began. Over the course of half an hour, however, the effect had slowly mounted to the point where words began to run together, becoming an unintelligible mush that more or less went into one ear and came out the other in a polite and sterile fashion.

While most everyone had submitted to the minister's attack, weathering the discourse on the shortness of life and the grandeur of heaven with stoic expressions, one young boy of about seven was becoming restless, swinging his legs back and forth with increasing animation until, in a fit of particularly ferocious boredom, he accidentally clipped the shoe of his older brother seated beside him.

"Quit it," the older boy hissed. "I'm trying to pay attention here." He was five years older and considered himself rather more worldly—this was his *second* funeral, after all.

"Sorry," came the meek reply.

A grand span of five seconds passed, and, in that time, the younger brother passed from being apologetic and self-conscious back to boredom again. "Is it almost over?"

The older brother gave him an exasperated look, whispering, "How am I supposed to know that? Anyway, you're not supposed to ask a question like that during a funeral."

"What kind of question should I ask?"

"You're not *supposed* to be asking questions. You're s'posed to be paying attention and feeling all sad that Uncle Carl is gone."

"Oh."

This was duly considered. After a moment: "But I'm not sad that Uncle Carl is gone. I hardly ever got to see him and, anyway, he had the big, mean dog that growled at me and that mustache that would wiggle when he talked."

"None of that stuff is supposed to matter, see, because now he has 'departed' and we're supposed to be sad because he has 'left his earthly shell behind and uh-scended unto heaven.'" The older brother settled back, looking smug. He had been particularly impressed with the phrase when the minister had said it, and he imagined that it made him look rather intelligent, saying it himself. He shifted, moving to put his

attention back onto the minister or, failing that, give the appearance of doing so when he was interrupted again.

"What's heaven like?"

The elder made a point of giving an exaggerated sigh so that his brother would realize what a silly question he had just asked, but it came louder than he intended, meriting him a harsh look from his mother. Philosophical ruminations were momentarily halted as both boys made a show of studiously paying attention to the minister until it was safe to talk again.

"Heaven is like, you know, Heaven."

He made a couple of vague gestures with his hands and, realizing that this might not be enough, started dipping into the really heavy stuff. "There are gonna be streets paved with gold. And everyone is always going to be happy, and no one is ever going

*"He was five years older and considered himself rather more worldly—this was his second funeral, after all."*

”

to get sick or nothing. And we're going to get to go and visit God all of the time and, you know. Look at him and tell him how great he is and stuff like that. And I think that he has a lamb, and we get to play with it." The older brother settled back down with the self-congratulatory look of someone who had just done some very serious pontificating.

"What, you mean like all the time?"

"What?"

"Just looking at God all the time? That sounds boring," said the younger brother dubiously.

The older brother looked aghast at this blasphemy. "You can't say that about heaven! It's going to be great! We're going to be angels 'n have wings, and we'll get to sing songs and talk about how great God is doing. Stuff like that. It'll be great."

At this point, the younger brother was looking seriously disturbed. Heaven was starting to sound like it would be a lot like church and this funeral, which was causing him to start wondering about the whole business. His older brother noticed this and quickly moved in to reassure him.

"I mean, there'll be more stuff than that. I think we get some harps and we'll get to sit on clouds and stuff and play them. And you'll be able to see all your old friends—"

"And Uncle Carl," helpfully supplied the younger brother.

"And Uncle Carl, too," agreed the elder. "You'll get to see him and everyone and talk about how great you're doing and how much fun you're having up together in heaven."

Tentatively, the younger brother wondered, "And what about Uncle Carl's dog?"

After a moment of thoughtful consideration,

the elder brother graciously conceded. "They probably don't let dogs like that into Heaven, so you lucked out there, I think."

A relieved expression crossed the younger brother's face at this small reprieve. He pictured in his mind celestial paradise, walking along those golden roads and playing on a harp when he wasn't busy looking at an aged man with a bushy white beard atop a throne (also golden) and telling him how great he was. A question occurred suddenly, and he nudged his brother again. "How're you going to have a golden road on the clouds? Wouldn't they fall through?"

The elder hesitated momentarily before making a dismissive gesture, rolling his eyes. "You dummy. That's just a dumb question. Everyone who knows about heaven knows the answer to that."

# THE GHOST OF SULLIVAN

BY STEVEN BAILEY

The Sullivan Building at Anderson University stands on the northern edge of the main campus, two stories high and extending into Hunt Chapel. On its left side is a patio with picnic tables, overshadowed by three tall oak trees. A wheelchair access ramp leads straight into an office on the right side of the building. The front, brick stairs wind up to two white doors, and high above on the overhang, passersby can just barely make out the dim impression left by the now missing word MUSIC in between SULLIVAN and BUILDING. As of 2010, this is home to the Christian Ministries effort on campus—an ironic choice to place the ministry, considering the building is alleged to be haunted.

The official legend, according to John Boyanowski in his book *Ghosts of Upstate South Carolina*, centers around Anna, the daughter of an Anderson College president—whose name isn't given—during the 1920s. They were said to be living in the Sullivan Building at that time. Apparently, she fell in love with a boy who was Roman Catholic, but her father disapproved of the match because of their own faith affiliation, Baptist. To express his disapproval, he threw her engagement ring out the window. She tried to feign hanging herself in an attempt to persuade her father to consent to their love, but ended up actually hanging herself. And ever since, “dozens of students and faculty members have reported seeing the spirit of Anna, not only in the building, but also roaming the front lawn of the college” (Boyanowski 49).

Such a myth begs to have questions answered, but like any good ghost story, many of these questions remain darkened. Did Anna really hang herself? If so, why hasn't documentation of it been found? And how do those who claim to see Anna know it isn't just some other natural phenomenon playing tricks on their eyes? According to Boyanowski, who fails to cite his sources, “School officials [...] admitted there is evidence that a former college president's daughter did die while living on campus in the 1920s. They would not say if the death was a suicide or not” (50). One question begs answering before the others: Which president had a daughter named Anna in the 1920s?

There were only two presidents at Anderson College during the 1920s. There was Dr. John Ellington White, who served from 1916-1927, and Dr. Anne Dove Denmark, serving from 1928 until 1953 (Hester xiv). There are no records found that suggest that Dr. Denmark had children. During a face-to-face interview I had with Greg Allgood, who works in the ministry building, he informed me that, “Annie Dove Denmark had no children. She never married.”

In Hester's history of the college, *They That Wait*, there is a brief, passing mention that John White's “salary was fixed at \$1,800 per year payable monthly with the understanding that his daughter have free board and tuition” (40). Could this be Anna? Unfortunately, no other reference is made to his having a daughter, named Anna or otherwise, and, more unsettling, no record is readily available to prove she—if she existed—hanged herself.

Greg Allgood informed me that the house belonged to the Sullivan family before being given to the college. “What I am going to tell you,” Allgood added, “is a hodgepodge of stories I've heard over the years.” According to those stories, the events occurred during the Civil War times—placing it long before the school was even founded. He had also heard two different endings for this version of the story. One was that the father disapproved of the young man, and the second was that the young man broke up with the daughter and went to fight in the Civil War. Since the legend centers on a girl from the 1920s, and the school was founded in 1911, the idea of its taking place in the Civil War is obviously another fabrication created through the ongoing passing down of this myth from person to person.

Katrina Johnson, a former student at Anderson University, claims to have experienced something akin to an odd encounter. While working late one night on papers in the Sullivan Building, Katrina watched the security guard lock up the doors and turn all the lights off in the rest of the building. Katrina was alone, working in Tracy West's office on the second floor. “It was the middle of the night, and I was typing away when I heard something downstairs,” Katrina told me over the phone, excitedly. She stopped and went to go look in the hallway, but didn't see anything. Suddenly, she heard muffled voices—“It sounded like a man and a woman”—coming from the direction of the chapel area. She made her way downstairs and peeked around, but

didn't see where the voices were originating. "I started freaking out," she said, "and ran back and closed the office door and pushed a chair against it."

Nancy Roberts, in her book *South Carolina Ghosts*, recounts an incident in 1982, reported in the December 19th issue of Anderson's *Independent Mail*, in which a boy who is conveniently given the pseudonym of Richard Hedgepeth went to practice in the music hall and encountered Anna sitting at a piano. The two proceeded to have a supernatural conversation in which Anna revealed she was searching for Francis, her fiancé. The protection of the source raises questions about the authenticity of the story.

There are multiple leads in this convoluted myth, all of which end in dead ends and provide

no facts to support the legend. The story of the so-called Ghost of Sullivan remains interesting at Anderson University, though, perhaps because of the ambiguous nature of its facts. Multiple versions of the events have spawned a local urban legend, and the idea of supernatural occurrences has fascinated students for generations. Greg Allgood, who claims to have known people who said they saw things at night, simply states, "I've worked here all day long for several years now and I've never seen anything."

Whatever students may hear about Anna's haunting of the Sullivan Building, this ghost story offers no proof. It is entirely possible that Katrina experienced the creakings of an old house or that her late-night working was beginning to play tricks

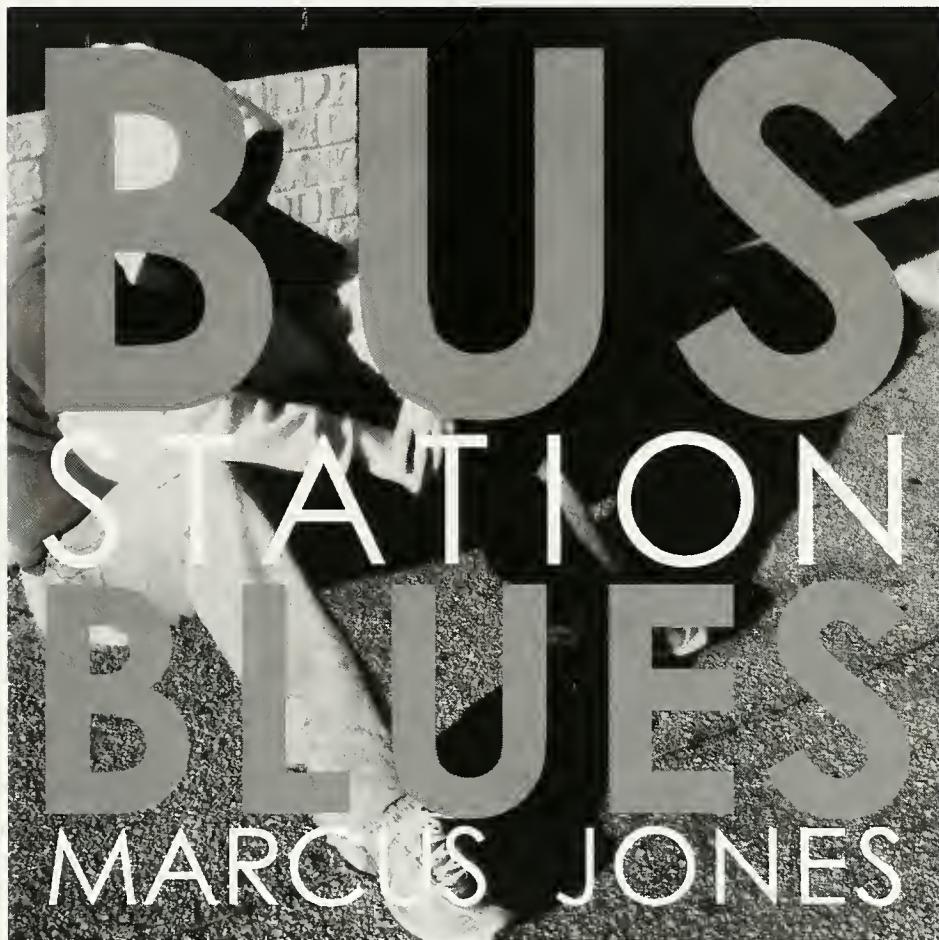
on her mind. Could not the voices also have come from outside the chapel? Another disappointment in the story is the absence of any records at Anderson University's Thrift Library of Anna's suicide. According to Nancy Roberts, Paul Talmadge, the vice president of the college, denied the suicide by stating, "Nothing tragic has ever happened on this campus or in the music building" (60-67). Perhaps that is true. The absence of evidence suggests it might be. But it is certainly true that Anna's spirit, if not necessarily the facts of her story, continues to engage the imagination of class after class of AU students, students prone to exploring mysterious attics in the hope of uncovering romantic secrets, but finding instead a tradition.

*"Such a myth begs to have questions answered, but like any good ghost story, many of these questions remain darkened."*

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**BUS STATION BLUES RECORD COVER** by DAVID BISHOP  
Winner, 2010 AAF Greenville Silver ADDY Award

## DRAG IT ALL OUT

BY JOHN MICHAEL HALL

Sometimes, on days like this,  
I picture you standing there.  
Your hands tucked neatly  
Into your hips, pressed  
Firm against your fragile shape.

You are watching me work,  
Watching me claim my rhythm  
That I want to believe —  
And make you believe —  
Is all my own.

I want desperately to stop  
Reaching out for your hands,  
But they stay locked, still,  
Resting at your sides.  
Your stare never ceases.

I resolve to say nothing to you,  
As I always do.  
Instead, I watch the last  
Of another washed-out day  
Draw its final breath — and expire.

## THE WIDOW'S MORNING

BY SHAWNA FOWLER

Clothing, no longer used, sits folded in  
looming piles in each corner of the living room  
and everywhere between, aside from the small sitting  
area in the middle. Light passes in through the  
curtained windows, tiny motes of dust visible as they float  
about the room, more appearing as others fall.  
The distinct smell of fresh brewed coffee  
travels up from the old mug carefully placed on the  
side table next to the big blue armchair.  
The spinning of the ceiling fan spreads the scent  
all around the small, cluttered room, and out an  
open door into the hallway.

The sound of water running can be heard  
from the nearby kitchen.

## RETARD

BY ADREAUNNA RHOME

To say the sky is blue is obvious,  
To say the moon is bright is dense,  
To say you are smart is absurd.  
In all my life I've never seen you fail,  
But know it's too late to handle.  
I only worry about next year  
And what those others think.



BE HONEST *by* DANIEL ENOMA

# PIONEERING

BY KATHRYN WHITE

Growing up, I had a balanced respect for doctors—for the authority of their knowledge, for their confident reassurance, for their cold, steel stethoscopes. While my mother believed firmly in the small army of herbal supplements we had to swallow each day, she also marched me to my fair share of doctors' offices. Like most American children, we caught chicken pox, fell prey to the flu almost every February, and broke our arms or gashed our knees. And, like most American women, my mother administered antibiotics and followed the doctor's orders. Yet, at an early age, I understood that there were times when my mother abandoned conventional medicine—and she was the doctor, the authority.

My mother was a midwife. Trained and certified, she physically and emotionally ushered families through alternative birth experiences. Clients came to her house for pre-natal checkups; she went to theirs for the delivery. I remember the still, early afternoons when my siblings and I were sent outside to play as her clients entered our house in that specific, laborious gait of full-blown pregnancy. At nine, of course, I didn't grasp the anomaly of the situation. My mom helped ladies have babies—I assumed it was just another part of her multifaceted job. Sometimes, being sneaky, I lingered at the back door and peered at whatever large woman was talking to my mother. I always felt fascinated by their taut bellies, how blatant and obvious the baby's presence was. I watched them, my mother—the doctor—and her client, disappearing down our hallway. At the end, I could see her

bedroom, the examining room. Before every client, my mother draped her bed in large white sheets. It probably would have been more practical to use our old, faded sheets, but looking back, I realize she understood the subtle communication of white sheets. They implied cleanliness, orderliness. They looked professional.

When my mother gave birth the first time, thirty-six hours passed before my mother was allowed to see or hold her twins—the first bloody glimpse was all she knew of her two tiny babies. She ran a slight fever, her body's natural reaction to stress. Consequently, the doctors had determined she should not have contact with her children until the fever faded in order to protect their vulnerable immune systems. Infuriated, my mother pleaded with the doctor, explaining that the fever was a natural reaction for her, not a sign of sickness. The doctor's authority held—she went three days without her babies.

My parents were forced to comply with hospital regulations, sitting idly while the doctor stripped their natural rights to their children with a quick signature.

That hospital experience stayed with her. Years later, she told me how she had felt like a prisoner in the hospital bed, denied of her basic, elemental rights as a woman and a mother. While she waited impatiently for her fever to drop, my mother spent those hours observing hospital life, making evaluations. We know more now—doctors know more now, thanks to advancements in technology and scientific research. Knowledge is power, and sometimes power is blinding. The doctors supervising my mother's first birth failed to see beyond the fever and treat her as an individual, rather than a fact. The sheer amount of required knowledge—advancements in research, breakthroughs in technology—sometimes leaves no room for a doctor's intuition or sensitivity. The regulations

*"I wondered if the scream of the ambulance's siren sounded like failure in my mother's ears."*

necessary to manage a hospital's technology and skill had actually interfered in my mother's wellbeing, her happiness.

Americans believe we have the right to exert control over our lives in every aspect, to have the freedom of choice. My mother is an American. She hated the cold distance of procedure and the rigidity of industry regulation, so she embraced alternatives. She did not base her decision on irrational ideas about doctors—there were many times my mother took me to the doctor. However, she recognized that doctors surrender flexibility for technology; it's a sacrifice they make. They are better equipped and prepared, yet they are bound to red tape and regulations. My mother gave birth in both a hospital and at home. After evaluation, she decided that freedom to control the experience was most important to her; eventually, she decided this freedom was something she could share with other women.

My mother is a pioneer. Her rejection of certain conventions—public education, hospital births—resulted from a decidedly American belief in choice. The lives of her children deserved the best she could give—and she felt she could give the best. When we talked about it, years later, she told me that a home birth was an amazing experience, that the intimacy couldn't be described. And when I asked her if she had ever been afraid to bear the weighty responsibility of bringing someone else's child into the world, she simply said, "No. Birth is a natural thing." She became a midwife because she wanted to offer other

women the same control and intimacy she had experienced. My mother understood her place as the doctor in the birth process—she was facilitator, the caretaker, not a distant dictator. Each birth she supervised was highly customized, and her job included balancing the mother's and baby's health care while following the family's specific wishes. I remember there were later afternoons when minivans arrived in our driveway unexpectedly, and women carrying small babies rang our doorbell. Previous clients often dropped by to show the baby and their gratitude. They thanked my mother for providing them with a peaceful, individualized birth experience. They thanked her for delivering their babies safely.

My mother faltered only twice. Oddly enough, the complications happened in the first and last births of her career—bookends, perhaps, to a successful career. In both cases, her client began severely hemorrhaging. Positioned at the end of the client's bed, with the screaming baby cradled in her gloved hands and the mother rapidly losing blood, my mother faced the incredible responsibility of being a doctor. A strategy had to be created immediately, a decision made in a matter of seconds. Births were simple when the baby was delivered healthy and with ease, but in those two births, my mother felt some of the paralyzing terror doctors confront daily—except doctors have the safety net of malpractice insurance, the rock of technology/knowledge to rely on. During the first hemorrhage, my mother chose coolly and bravely to stop the bleeding

herself, and did so successfully, utilizing techniques she had researched. But in her last birth, when my mother thought her client was going to bleed out, she called an ambulance.

I wondered if the scream of the ambulance's siren sounded like failure in my mother's ears. Did it sting, I thought, to end her career on such a somber note? I remember the morning she came home from that last birth—I was older by then, old enough to recognize the exhaustion in her face. Her client had survived, was doing well, in fact, but the night had been grueling. As my mother set her midwifery bag down and went wearily to the shower, I looked at the bag. It seemed to me like the clichéd black leather doctor's bag. It contained the majority of all she could do or offer.

When I look at my mother, I see the pioneer spirit that has defined America. I think about the many babies she successfully delivered, the women that she cared for, and I see her joining a history of the strong American women who have always delivered their babies at home. She was clearheaded and strong enough in her evaluations to rationally conclude that she could offer an alternative to rigid healthcare standards. And yet, she was also strong enough to acknowledge her weakness and rely on the technology and skill she couldn't provide when necessary for her client. My mother always placed the ultimate wellbeing of her client first; she treated each client as an individual. That is the mark of an American—that is the mark of a good doctor.

## ARTIST SPOTLIGHT:

### RICKEY MORGAN

Sometimes, art acts like a lever—prying off old perspectives to reveal truth. Sometimes, it's a mirror, reflecting even the parts of ourselves we don't like to see. Ricky Morgan, a senior at Anderson University, views his art as a way to expose prejudice and reveal societal bias. His work this year focuses on prisoners, exploring the ugliness of injustice. "I started seeing biases and societal factors that make a one person more likely to be incarcerated as opposed to another," Ricky says. "I think that we sometimes all feel imprisoned ourselves."

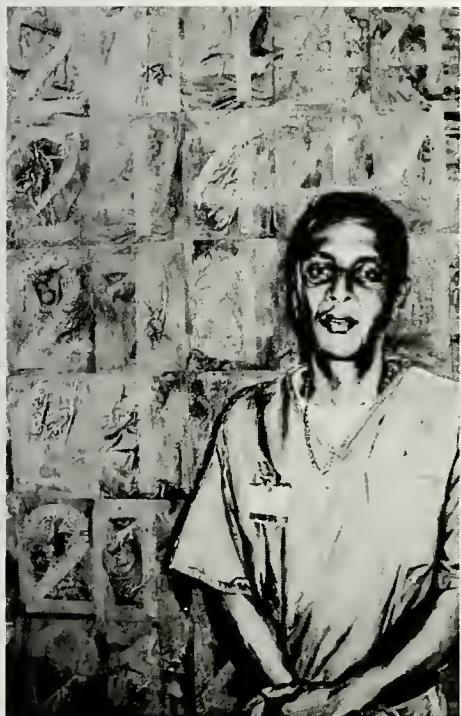
In portraying the incarcerated, he worked to establish a connection between his subject and his viewers. Ricky's series attempts to level prejudices about prisoners and uncover a common humanity. However, the process of creating these paintings has been an emotional one for Ricky as he struggled to "put a face" to prisoners. While working through the imagery for the series, Ricky was in contact with an inmate in death row. "To have someone telling you that they do not want to die, but you know the likelihood is that they are going to have to face death... is difficult to deal with," he explains.

And, of course, painting is work. "It takes discipline and it's physical. Some days you just have to force yourself to get in there," he reminds me. But Ricky's passion for his subject has helped him persevere, and today, his series reminds us who prisoners are—and consequently, who we are.

- BETH COOPER, JIVAN DAVÉ, &  
KATHRYN WHITE

For more with Rickey Morgan visit  
[www.andersonuniversity.edu/ivyleaves](http://www.andersonuniversity.edu/ivyleaves).





CARLOS (above left)

*"Carlos" is about an inmate that I still correspond with and how a human being is just reduced to a number. I repeated the number in the background and allowed him to become a part of that. If you look closely at the texture of the painting the numbers are on him also.'*

MICHAEL MOUNTAIN (above right)

*"Michael Mountain" is just a portrait of an inmate. Different inmates that I've corresponded with have lived differently from each other even though they're all in the same place. That particular painting shows someone who still has some hope and still tries to carry on and have a life on the inside. It's meant to show how someone develops an institutionalized way of thinking and living which is reflected in our own society and how we follow traditional institutions and cultural traditions.'*

DANIELLE (left)

*"Danielle was an inmate I corresponded with on Death Row who was executed during the process of doing that painting. Basically, it brings capital punishment into the light where people will have a dialogue and closely examine the racial, geographic, and socioeconomic biases that are attached to the painting and start questioning whether we really need to be taking it to the point where we end someone's life. It is murder."*



# STRING MILL BLUES

BY JOHN MICHAEL HALL

The first real job I ever had was in a string mill. I sold my whole summer away that year. Another textile plant was shutting down—job by job—and they needed temp workers, anybody looking for good pay on a short-term basis. That described me pretty well, so when my aunt told me about a job opening, I jumped on it.

They hired me the next week and gave me a title, *spin floor operator*. That sounded important to me when I rolled the words around on my tongue—not bad for my first job. But it didn't take me long to realize that spin floor operator was something more like a glorified janitor. It was my job to keep the machines going when they blew a thread line. I was also responsible for breaking back the nylon lines and wiping the stations down when it was time for the thread to finish wrapping on a spool, a process known as doffing. Still, I couldn't complain. It was a good job, and the pay was about the best any teenager would hope to get. I decided to stick it out.

I worked twelve-hour swing shifts for nine dollars an hour. That adds up to one hundred and eight dollars a shift before taxes—good enough for a nineteen-year-old. The pay was even better when I worked overtime on the weekends. In no time at all, I had more money in the bank than I ever had before. The physical and mental struggles of working a swing shift went away after I got my first paycheck. I felt like I could do that job for the rest of my life—just as many of my few remaining coworkers had.

The company that hired me through the temp service made the nylon for various nylon cloth products, hence the term *string mill*. The plant itself had seen a total of three owners over its forty-year history, and when I came in, the building had a shared ownership: one company owned the building, another owned the equipment.

Each time my shift rolled around, I'd make my way up to the plant from my home thirty minutes away. Depending on the swing of the shift, I would start work at either seven in the morning or seven in the evening. The sun was shining when I went in, unless it was a rainy day, and it was shining when I left. Night did not exist under the phosphorescent glow of the plant—the lights never went off. I saw only one set of windows the entire time I worked there—the clear glass doors at the entrance. Once I stepped into that massive structure, I left the comfort of sunlight and fresh air. These were replaced with the smell of hot polymer and the low roar of machines.

Whenever I walked through the front door, I felt like I was treading on forbidden ground—like I didn't belong there. The main hall of the building was every bit of a quarter mile long, echoing the clang of metal and the beeping of forklifts in the warehouse. My job site was at the very end of this faceless corridor. I carried the weight of the required steel-toed shoes as I dragged them along the endless slab of concrete. By the end of every shift, my feet were so tender that I had to hobble my way back out, wincing all the way. As I made my way in, I passed sectors that had long been

shutdown—the jobs sent overseas. Only certain parts of my company's side of the plant continued to run, and their time was nearly up.

Despite the dullness of my job, the plant itself intrigued me from the beginning. The whole idea of it was new and foreign to me. Most of my family on my mother's side had worked in mills in the area. I heard all the shoptalk growing up, but I never knew what any of it meant. I was finally seeing the truth of it all unfold right before me. *Had this been what they did all those years?*

To get to the spin floor where I worked, I had to climb two and a half flights of stairs to the mezzanine—Area 324—the half-floor that isn't really a floor. Whether I was going up or down, safety precautions in the stairwell specifically stated that employees must keep a hand on a rail at all times. I instead chose to hit my fist on it in a rhythmic pattern, while whistling a tune. My metallic fist strikes would go pinging about like sonar into the acoustic chamber, echoing the pattern up and down all five floors. As soon as I got to the mezzanine, my tune was drowned by the melancholy tune of industry—though it was a lot quieter than it used to be.

They called my area the spin room because the nylon string was spun about two feet above the mezzanine on the third floor. To go into the workspace itself, I had to pass through an air lock chamber. This kept the air at a specified temperature and pressure around the machines—it made me feel like I was in a spaceship. Once inside, I would put in my earplugs and gather the rest of my

safety equipment. Then, I'd be sure to get the doff schedule from the operations computer to stay on task—the computer moderated everything. I would then either begin work or walk around inspecting the thread lines. This is what I did most often.

About three feet above my head, the behemoths known as extruders ran constantly without rest. These machines devoured millions of tons of chip—small plastic pellets—and superheated it all until it was molten. Then they sent it down through twelve spinnerets on the mezzanine into twelve nylon thread lines in what is called a position. Each thread line is composed of twelve individual hair-like lines called filaments. All of this was sent quickly down two floors where the thread combined into one strand and wrapped on spools. Mile after mile flew by my face that summer. Cloth, time, investment, profit—flying down a shoot and wrapping on a spool.

The days and the nights seemed so long in that place. I worked alone for the most part, and my job didn't require a whole lot of work. I sat around a lot. My head would nod back and forth from exhaustion, and I would stare at the clock for what felt like days. Occasionally, I'd fall asleep and the earplug muffled groan of the machines would whir its way through my short-lived dreams.

These dreams were often interrupted by random P.A. announcements or the occasional sound of the intercom blaring Johnny Paycheck's "Take This Job and Shove It." This usually occurred on the night shift

when all of the bosses were at home. Workers would pick up the phone in their work area and dial the plant-wide announcement number. They would then blare their disgruntled anthem into the empty halls and unattended work areas, bringing a short-lived smile to the few exhausted faces left in the building.

If I ever did get settled into a nap, my relief worker would come and tap me on the shoulder—my turn to go on break. I'd go and sit in the break room and try to do the same thing—sleep—but sometimes I'd eat a midnight version of *lunch* instead. Often, there were other people passing time in the break room as well, and I would try to make conversation to stay awake. Black, White, Hispanic, supervisors, cleaning ladies. There we sat, the distant hum of the machines keeping our eyes open. All with one thing in common: come August, we'd all be out of a job.

If I didn't go to the break room, I'd go exploring. I had a whole hour and a lot of curiosity. From floor to floor and room to room, I soon discovered that the place was a labyrinth of iron and concrete, haunted by the ghost of American industry. I passed work stations, still lighted overhead as if the workers were about to return from a smoke break. I passed toolboxes opened and their contents flayed out on counters like gutted fish waiting for the frying pan. I passed old machinery scattered, broken, pulled apart on scuffed up concrete floors like fallen men on a forgotten battlefield.

The plant had once been a great force in the community, employing over fifteen



**MOVIES ON DRUGS** by LEIGH HILL  
Winner, 2010 AAF Greenville Silver ADDY Award  
Winner, 2010 District Silver ADDY Award



hundred workers. There were times that I could picture that in my head when I'd go exploring. All of the stories I'd heard about working in the mill. Friendships built on the job. Pride in the work place. Camaraderie in the break rooms. Working your way up the ladder. Hard, rewarding work, and a big fat pay check every other week. It was all gone. Nothing left but the stories.

The end of the summer came, and I drew my last paycheck from the plant, as did many other employees. I had plenty of cash saved and a mind full of memories. I still like to think about the time I spent there, especially when I drive through the area at night. At night, it still looks alive from the road, despite the empty parking lots. Every

evening, the endless orange glow of the security lights sets the whole sky ablaze, blending and burning against black heavens. The orange dome cascades down and around the roads and the homes and the schools that surround it; the fabric made in that mill is woven into it all. And screaming louder than any machine ever could is the silence, the haunting silence. It comes from the absence of the giant's roar. The same roar that shook across the South for decades and has since been quelled to a sickly whisper. *Progress* took its place.

And still, the giant sleeps.

## POLITICS

BY STEVEN BAILEY

I won't punch a king in the face  
or cheerfully slice my wrists—tears  
with honey swirling in a bowl.  
Because, frankly, my dear, it's mist.  
There's an empty tomb, better than the UN.  
There's one bridge to burn, not rub.  
Nearly six billion soldiers march to Death,  
and I'm some weird guy who sees it.  
Like a bright sign it stands, glaring,  
but few choose to hear it—like lemurs,  
or pygmy marmosets wielding stones and  
pink highlighters—screaming at you to  
"Shut up and be humble today!"



SCAT LADY J RECORD COVER



**T2 by TIGI TILL**

Winner, 2010 AAF Greenville Gold ADDY Award  
Winner, 2010 District Silver ADDY Award



YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT *—LUCAS SIN*

## LINCOLN COUNTY, TENNESSEE

BY JOSH SORRELLS

It stretches out like an ocean,  
the hills rolling like waves,  
the clouds like the sea's foam.  
From up here, in my crow's nest, I can see  
the miles disappear on the horizon.  
I can see the houses, like tiny ships  
in the distance, sailing across the Tennessean Sea.  
The Warren's house, the Cobb's barn,  
the Lambert's cottage. There is smoke rising  
from their chimneys like smoke from a cannon.

Captain! There is a storm in the distance.  
It brings ice! It brings death!  
Captain, oh Captain! Our colorful sails,  
they stand no chance against the storm!  
Captain! What will we do? It's upon us!  
The sun is setting, our lights have gone out.

Autumn wakes up to winter,  
the hills rolling like waves,  
their trees naked and cold.  
From up here, in my crow's nest, I can see  
the first frost glistening in the morning's light.  
I can see the land shiver in the cold.  
My Captain's sails, ripped apart and scattered,  
coloring the hills, no longer catching the wind.  
The smell of smoke fills the air,  
the colors dull down. My heart slows down  
and as I stare out at what surrounds me  
I see the houses below me,  
their fires inside beckoning me  
to climb down from this crow's nest.



JEALOUSY FOLLOW



## WHEN YOU STOPPED BEING MY LITTLE BROTHER

BY RAFAEL ALCANTAR JR.

When you learned how the great flood fixed everything  
you went outside and found a moon in the puddle  
growing from the garden hose in your hand.  
Your dog stares at you from behind the chicken wire fence,  
watches you sway a little with your eyes closed.  
Mom sees you through the kitchen window,  
*Apaga la manguera!*  
You: *I can't do nothing.*



**HALF ALIVE** by DAWN RICKARD

## THE BLONDE

BY BRENNNA DAVIS

Because I thought that  
they knew, I left. Pulling  
only my coat over my bare  
shoulders, I could run only  
as far as the barrier of trees  
before pivoting my hips  
back towards you,  
noticing a fleck of paint on my wrist.  
I thought that I was strong  
enough to continue with secrecy,  
but as my green coat  
became one with those  
trees that you hate,  
my bones became as gnarled  
and weak as their branches.

## RICOCHET

BY KATHRYN WHITE

Mountain, valley. Snow and no snow—  
Alaskans comprehend in the language of opposites.  
Dark and not dark. The midnight sun is a lie,  
a tourist's euphemism for the mere absence of dark.

Alaskans—those misfits, dreamers—ricochet  
from extreme to extreme. They are accustomed  
to sudden arrivals and departures. In late July,  
the fireweed turns spiky and white. Snow is six weeks away.

For them, the mountains are mute; the loons sing silent.  
The constant melodrama of Alaskan skies, the months  
of muffling snow, endow them all with indifference,  
a blindness. They forget where they are.

Just as I, flying home, stare bleakly over the  
flat, flat fields of Texas and see nothing.  
Returning from a summer in Alaska, lost  
without the mountains, all I can do is ricochet.



WHEN  
WE WERE  
MADE OF

# OREAMS

BY MICAH TAYLOR

*"While they still sleep, I slip out the door  
How can I leave when my anchor's ashore?"*  
-Dustin Kensrue, *The Whaler*

He came and went as often as the wind changed. Not long after his boat brought him into the port would he be on the next one out. He was a fisherman, of crab, specifically. His beard was thick and dark, mangy as steel wool. His hair was shaggy, and his skin was weathered and dark. His face was hard. He braved the most dangerous of waters in the Pacific to bring in what had come to be known around this port as the *live gold of the sea*.

He stepped off his ship, *The Dowager*, and into the cold Alaskan air. His feet hit steady

ground like Saint Peter finding his footing among the waves. He was home. At least that's what his shipmates called it.

"Excited to get to finally see the wife and daughter, Jude?" an older and equally burly man next to him asked.

There was a lingering silence of no reply. They both looked over the busy harbor, breathing heavily, their breath so cold it froze before them and rose like a burnt offering from their mouths.

"Well?" he asked.

Jude started as if waking from a dream and looked the older man in the eyes. "Always," he said with a forced smile. The older man chuckled and patted him on the back.

"Maybe you should take the next expedition off. Spend some time with the family. We had a great catch this time, enough to hold us all over for a while. I'm sure your wallet won't miss one run."

"You know that's not me, Benno."

"That's right. You love doing this, don't you?" The old man forced a smile that quickly faded. His face became less jolly, his eyebrows narrowed, and he stared intently at the younger man. "Seriously, Jude, you might want to consider spending some time ashore. It's a high-tension job, and I'm sure Regina would love to have you home for a while." With that he gave one more jolt to his partner's back, heaved his sack over his shoulder, and walked away. He took one more glance over his shoulder, but Jude didn't see him.

The cab dropped him off at his house in California around five in the evening the next day. Jude exited the car, paid the driver, took out his bags, set them down on the pavement, and turned to behold his house. It was a large house compared to the one he grew up in. Two stories, brick, a two-car garage which contained two SUVs, his wife's and his own. The walkway up to the front of the house was lined with two rows of flowers and made the house, he had often heard from others, very inviting. The sea already felt distant. He could feel it tugging at him, but at the same time, this was home.

He picked up his bag and started towards the door, but, before he could make it to the front porch, the door burst open and out ran his five-year-old daughter.

"Daddy! Daddy! You're home!" she squealed in a voice that seemed five octaves above any normal human range. His bags fell to the ground as he traded their space in his arms for his daughter's tiny body. She was a beautiful brown-haired, brown-eyed girl whose demeanor and appearance had always seemed, to him, adorably impish.

"Hey, Bridgett," he said as he kissed her. "I missed you, princess."

She rubbed her hands through his beard. "Your face feels scratchy." As she continued to talk, his attention went past her to the doorway where his wife leaned against its frame. She was beautiful. Her eyes were bright brown, almost gold in the afternoon sunlight. Her hair was ink-black and fell shoulder length on her thin frame. She smiled, and the sun seemed to cast its beams directly onto her tan skin.

Jude moved his daughter to one arm, picked up his things with the other, and walked toward the house. Arms still full, he greeted his wife with a kiss.

"Welcome home," she said with a smile as she took Bridgett from his arms. He could see it in her eyes. She was happy to see him, but she knew he would leave again. "Come on, baby," she said to Bridgett. "Let's let daddy unpack and get cleaned up." She rubbed his face. "And shave."

After shaving, taking a shower, and throwing all of his clothing in the washing machine, Jude came downstairs to a table spread with lasagna, bread, and salad. His favorite. She had probably been cooking all

afternoon. He hadn't eaten a home-cooked meal in over two months, and the smell alone was enough to make him think he could drop dead that moment and die happy.

"You didn't have to cook," he said. "We could have gone out tonight."

His wife glared at him.

"Jude, it's your first night home. Of course I want to cook for you."

He smiled. "Well, you didn't have to go to the trouble, but I am thankful." He kissed her and pulled out her chair for her, and then sat down at the head of the table. Bridgett to his left; his wife, Regina, to his right.

"Do you want to pray, Bridgett?" he asked.

She responded by aggressively bowing her head and folding her hands. "Dear Jesus, thank you for the food, and thank you for getting Daddy home safely and please help him to stay for a long time. Amen."

Jude opened his eyes and met his wife's uncomfortable glance. They ate in silence for a few minutes before Jude asked Bridgett how school was going. The floodgates that were her mouth opened, and the rest of dinner was filled with the dramatic happenings of the life of a five year old.

He had been gone for a little over two months this time. The catch had been a big one. With the sale, he would be able to provide a rather luxurious life for the family for six months. Benno had been right when he said Jude could skip the next trip. In fact, added to the savings from the previous expeditions, he wouldn't have to go on another trip for at least a year.

The first time Jude went out to sea was a little over three years earlier. He had been married for only a year, his daughter was turning two, and he had been out of a job for a few months. The seemingly perfect newlywed life had begun to wear off. Long nights staying up, gazing into each others eyes in adoration had become shorter evenings, worrying about financial matters. Bridgett had constantly stayed sick as an infant. Hospital bills were piling up from her visits, and Jude was beginning to feel inadequate as he was unable to provide for his wife and daughter. The resulting stress had caused the marriage to strain, weaken, as financial worry became fear of the future and fear of the future became arguments about Jude's inability to hold a steady job.

He had just finished fighting with Regina one night over how the month's rent was going to be paid when his friend Benno called him. Benno was in his forties, almost twice Jude's age. They had both been laid off at the plant in Oregon where they lived at the time.

"Hey brother, I may have found us a job." Benno's voice came on the other end of the phone.

Jude sighed, exhausted from arguing with his wife and not so much in the mood for one of Benno's crazy get-rich schemes. "What's that?"

"Crab fishing."

At first, Jude wasn't sure if this was some kind of crude joke. If so, it was coming at a bad time. Benno had a huge heart and cared for Jude like his own son, but he was typically overjoyous and relatively goofy, leading Jude

to believe that his friend was completely unaware of the strain of responsibilities resting on a newlywed father.

"Are you kidding me, Benno?"

"No, man, I'm for real. We fly over to Alaska, head out on the sea for a couple months, then cash in and don't have to go to work for another year!"

"This sounds like another bad plan, Benno, like the time you tried to sell pencils to people in the office to raise support for teen drug abuse and rape-awareness."

"What was wrong with that, Jude?"

"None of that money went towards teens at all."

Benno had just wanted to make some cash on the side. At the end of the week, he took most of the office out for drinks, got very drunk, and admitted to fabricating the whole thing. He had bought the entire office alcohol with money that was supposedly going towards keeping kids off drugs.

"Oh, yeah." There was silence. "Yeah, that was bad. Hey, do you think that's why they fired me?"

"I doubt it. There was also your orphan fund...."

"Yeah, man, but I'm telling you, this is different. It's completely real. These guys, these fishermen, they go out, bring back a big catch, and then sell them for a ton of money. They sell 'em to five star restaurants, and fancy rich people pay a ridiculous amount for these things, like places in California, you know?"

"There has to be a catch."

"Oh, yeah," Benno said, then paused.

"It's crazy dangerous. Like, two fisherman a week die in the Bering Sea."

"Benno, I appreciate you looking out for me. But I have a wife and kid. I can't afford to leave them behind and go on some crazy fishing trip. Sorry, bud. Thanks, but no thanks. I'm not so desperate that I have to risk my life yet."

Leaving his family was out of the question. The notion was just as preposterous to him as proposing he ever return to a desk job. There had been a few desk jobs open up actually. He had turned them down, though, without telling Regina. He had sworn never to take a job where he had to sit in a seat all day ever again. A month later, he had gone back to a couple of those same offices and checked for jobs, but they were already taken. He was getting desperate.

A week after Benno's call, Jude found himself at the local Cathedral. He had come to ask the priest for help, maybe for some food. He was a good Catholic. He and his family were at Mass every Saturday evening and Sunday morning, and he even named his daughter after the patron saint of healers. But it seemed to Jude that the church was not as faithful to him as he was to the church. The priest said something like "God helps those who help themselves" and urged him to look harder, not turn down any more job offers. Jude left the church empty-handed and with even less hope than when he went in.

He prayed for another way, another job, another means by which to provide for his family. He loved his wife and daughter. He hated arguing. He didn't even know why they



**ROBIN & MARION** by ELIZABETH TATE

argued. There was nothing to disagree about. They were just on hard times. He also hated the idea of leaving them. Even a desk job was beginning to sound all right. But a month after his phone conversation with Benno, Jude packed his bags and left for Alaska.

There had been plenty of arguments in the weeks before he left for sea, but the economy was bad, and Jude knew he had to provide for his family, and there seemed to be a similar argument every time he came home. Tonight, home again after two months, would be no different. He gathered all the dishes and took them to the sink.

He and Regina washed dishes together. His wife tucked Bridgett in while he made a couple of phone calls confirming the numbers from his latest catch. He entered the bedroom and collapsed onto the bed. He was drained. He hated flying. It seemed to take more out of him than the months he spent at sea. Regina was waiting in the bed. She wrapped her arms around him.

"Are you going to be staying for a while this time, baby?"

He was quiet for a long time and stared at the wall. She kissed his cheek and ran her hands along his newly shaven face.

"The next boat leaves harbor in two months," he said at length.

She withdrew from him and sat back on the bed.

"You're not going out on it, are you?"

It had been this way for three years now. He would come home, spend a couple months

on land, and then leave again. It was a pattern, the pattern of life they now found themselves in. It was his job.

"I have to."

"No, you don't. We're fine here, Jude. We're perfectly fine. You can afford to take a while off!"

"I have to provide for the family."

"We're plenty provided for. We have plenty. We have more than we need."

They sat in silence for what seemed like hours. He was motionless. She shuffled slightly on the bed.

"Why are you still doing this, Jude? You've gone out what, six times now?"

"I need to go back out—"

"Why? For what purpose? It's not about the money anymore, is it? We have everything we need and more." Tears began to well up in her eyes. "You don't do it for the money anymore. I mean you're never even around to spend it. What do you do it for? For the rush? Because it's dangerous, is that it? Does it mean more than your family?"

Her words stung. Jude had always sworn he would never be one of those guys who put work before his family. Many in the office had mistaken this for being unmotivated, a misconception he had never really cared to correct or fight. But this job was different. He was called to the sea. It was what he had come to know. It was part of his life, and it was exciting.

"One fisherman a week. One out of every three hundred. Dead. I watch the shows, I read

up on it. It's the deadliest occupation in the world! This is the first time you haven't come back sick or stitched up! What's going on with you? Do you still love me? Do you still love us?"

That was a stupid question. Of course he loved his family. More than anything. But she was partly right. The job did hold the highest fatality percentage. Of course there was a sense of danger, a sense of risk, involved in the job. It was exciting. And he was good at it. His ship always turned the largest profit. They were the golden boys of the fleet. He was part of the best crew on the sea, and they were a part of him.

He looked into her teary copper eyes.

"We have plenty of money saved up," she pleaded. "Take some time off and look for another job. A safer one, closer to home."

That was exactly what he was afraid of. What kept him out at sea. What he was running away from. Safety. He could never settle for a normal job. He could never be bored again. It would kill him. He would rather die at sea than fade away on land. He could never go back to a nine-to-five, tie and briefcase job where he sat in a box all day and was just another face in the waves of mediocre lives.

He took off his pants and shirt. His back was painted purple, blue, and yellow from numerous rum-ins with the ship. He pulled back the covers and climbed into bed next to his wife. He put his arms around her.

"You know what? You're right. I'll tell you what. I'll start looking for something around here. You know, something closer. If something



comes up in the next couple months, I'll take it."

"Will you look hard?"

"Of course," he lied. "I do miss you, you know that right? And I love you." This was all truth. He kissed her, reached over, and turned off the lights.

The next morning was like the many just like it in the following weeks. He ate breakfast with his family, took Bridgett to school, and then drove around listening to Bob Dylan, "looking for jobs." By the third week, he had his daughter trained to sing along with the timeless musician. Her favorite song was "Born in Time," and she never hesitated to squeal out the lyrics:

"In the lonely night,

In the blinking stardust of a pale blue light

You're comin' thru to me in black and white  
When we were made of dreams."

Every few days he would stop by a place and pick up an application or schedule an interview. At first, he never attended any of the interviews he set up; it was just good to have a guy on the answering machine informing him of a certain time for his interview. This made Regina happy. As the weeks passed and he fell back into life with his family, Jude began to consider the jobs. He eventually began to attend the interviews, only to be told at every one that he "wasn't qualified." Sometimes he was "over qualified." The only jobs he'd ever had had come from favors, from guys either he or Benno knew. That was in Oregon.

California was different. He didn't know anyone here.

Two months finally came to an end and Jude had found no work. He had tried, genuinely, for about two weeks. As the time drew nearer for his departure, he became more discouraged by the rejections and more excited about being back at sea, working among the waves. So he packed up his things and made preparations for his next trip. Of course, the last couple weeks at home, after he had made his intentions of going back to sea known, were scattered with tearful encounters as Regina realized that he would leave for the sea. But just as the tide rolls in and back out, the time came for Jude to depart and return to the waves.



One night, after Bridgett was tucked into bed, Jude loaded his things into a cab to leave. He usually met Benno in Oregon, and they flew out together, but, to Jude's surprise, Benno had begun dating a pretty, late-thirty-something blonde and would be staying home this time around.

"Maybe I'll find me a job as a cook at some seafood place," he had said over the phone.

Jude came back into the house to make one final sweep. He looked to the top of the stairs and saw Bridgett standing there, tears welling in her eyes like two small tide-pools full of amazement and wonder. She ran down the stairs and jumped into his arms.

"Daddy, Daddy, don't leave again!"

"I have to, princess. Daddy's got to go to

work." He hugged her tightly. "I love you, angel," he said as he let her go. He stood up and kissed his wife. "I love you," he said. "I'll be back soon. I promise." He looked into her rusty brown eyes.

"I love you," she said as he turned to open the door. He left it open behind him and he walked to the car. He knew she believed he had been genuinely job searching for two months and had nothing to show for it. He could tell she thought she had lost him. But it was all he could do. His wife and daughter stood in the doorframe watching him leave. She would worry about him. She always did. He hated that. He got in the taxi and shut the door. If only she knew, like he did, that he was going to be all right. Nothing would ever happen to him. He knew it. Nothing would ever happen.

## WRITER SPOTLIGHT:

### MARGARET B. HAYES

"I hate the phrase 'killing time,'" Margaret Hayes says. "I don't want to kill it, I want to use it." We were sitting in Anderson University's Thrift Library, a stone's throw from Mrs. Hayes' home in the historic district of Anderson, South Carolina. Her eyes, a laughing brown touched with green, were shining. She leaned across the armrest of her chair towards me, as if we were old friends. A normal day for her, she said, is spent writing and drawing, unless it is a Tuesday. Then she can be found volunteering at the Anderson Memorial Hospital, something that she has done for over eighteen years. She prefers sunny days to rainy days for prime writing, and finds that rainy days usually lead to spending those days reading.

Born in her grandmother's home in Williamston, South Carolina, and raised in Asheville, North Carolina, Margaret Hayes moved back to her hometown to attend Anderson College when it was still a two-year school. It was 1941, and she was sixteen years old. She told me that she remembers being given a twenty-five dollar scholarship towards her tuition under the condition that she keep her grades up. She also remembers, fondly, sitting in her cousin's Model A Ford parked directly in front of the Merritt Building eating lunch every day, when she was "really just so young and innocent."

In 1942, she graduated cum laude with a commercial degree, showing that she had held up her end of the bargain. Her parents had always been very supportive and raised her with the idea of going to school to become a secretary, something that was not unheard of during that time. Her mother was a painter,



and, as Hayes mentioned, "always wanted to be a writer, but possibly lacked the education for it." Hayes, with her education, may have had more choices than her mother did, but taking care of her family was her priority for most of her life.

Shortly after her husband died, Hayes began what she likes to call the "second part of her life." Needing another way to use her time wisely after her husband's death, and realizing that adding sewing to her other hobby of drawing was not enough, Hayes enrolled in a creative writing class at Anderson College in the early 1990s.

Professor Frances Mims, after whom Anderson University's Frances Mims Lecture Series is named, directed the first class that she audited, but the class that had the most influence on her was the first that she took with Dr. Wayne Cox. At that time Dr. Cox required students to write regularly in a journal. Hayes believes that there is something "between the hand and the mind that work together perfectly," and that this has not only helped her develop as a writer, but also helped her explore certain parts of herself that she had not explored before. She had many questions that she needed to answer for herself, and journaling was a way to try and answer them. Dr. Cox read these journals regularly, and an encouraging note from him pushed her to try and make something of her writing. She has submitted her poetry to *Ivy Leaves* every year since.

Like many students, Hayes' writing career began in the classroom, and after being encouraged by an instructor, she began to write more. At first, she wrote with the



#### A CONVERSATION with MARGARET B. HAYES

*"Margaret Hayes taught me something about living: don't ever let yourself get old. It IS possible to begin and have a successful career at any phase of life."*

cadence of walking, occasionally rhyming. Over the years, her style has turned to free verse, and she has abandoned that familiar rhythm that she once used as a young writer. Today, much of her work has been published, and she has received various awards for her writing. She has been published in *Ivy Leaves* over twenty times, and her work has appeared multiple times in the anthologies of the South Carolina Writers Workshop, of which she is a member. She has also published in *Emrys*, a literary journal published by the Emrys Foundation, which is based in Greenville, South Carolina, and she is a member of the Foothills Writers' Guild.

Margaret Hayes has avoided killing time well; she is living out her mother's dream of becoming a writer, and she has made a success

of her own dream. She has, as she says, "seen the unfolding of time," and she can "recall my own planting of seed, / how some bloom without fragrance, / some with seed to share, and / some that give nothing back—" From what I can tell, all of Margaret Hayes' seeds have given back, all have bloomed with fragrance and an abundance of their own seed to share. Her enthusiasm to fully live out the second part of her life as an accomplished writer has proven to be moist, rich soil. The evidence? Her poetry.

-BRENNNA DAVIS

For more with Margaret B. Hayes visit [www.andersonuniversity.edu/ivyleaves](http://www.andersonuniversity.edu/ivyleaves).

## ELEGY OF THE SEED

BY MARGARET B. HAYES

Last year's pots of dormant soil  
sit alongside others, green  
with germinating seeds,  
the new scouts of life,  
raising their flags and  
marking their paths.

This is my daughter's porch.  
She is still in the gardening  
business, her own offspring  
opened like buds, but clinging  
to the warm soil of home.

From my perennial bed,  
I've seen the unfolding of time,  
and recall my own planting of seed,  
how some bloom without fragrance,  
some with seed to share, and  
some that give nothing back—  
like the unfathomable soil  
in this porch's clay pots.

This book contains them and some statements that reactionary behaviors. We can not be held liable if this occurs. Any reference to the negative animals or gruesome acts of the meat-packing industry could result in considerable changes in eating habits, like: an urge to vomit at the sight of a patty, dousing yourself with red paint, and standing public with protest signs on your chest. To insure this does not happen, care must be taken when reading The Jungle by Upton Sinclair.

This book contains them and some statements that reactionary behaviors. We can not be held liable if this occurs. Any reference to forgoing norms to live a more alternative lifestyle may lead to certain behaviors, like: masking days of patchouli, thinking you call dreadlocks and tricking out your car to follow The Dead. To insure this does not happen, care must be taken when reading Walk on the Wild Side by Norman Mailer.

This book contains them and some statements that reactionary behaviors. We can not be held liable if this occurs. Any perceived reference to excess or melodrama or excessive fascinations could have negative by-products, like: devoting your time to the musical stylings of Nickelback, the latest in spiked wear and writing a poem about the last time you hit today. To insure this does not happen, care must be taken when reading The Essential Tales and Edgar Allan Poe.

This book contains thematic material and some statements that may induce reactionary behaviors. We can not be held liable if this occurs. Any perceived reference to ingesting hallucinogenic substances of any variety may result in altered perceptions of yourself and the physical world around you, like: seeing small, pink bears dance around your bedroom, believing your parent's basement walls are slowly melting, and swearing that your navel is an escape hatch to an enchanted, dream-world of bacon. To insure this does not happen, care must be taken when reading Alice in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll.

BARNES & NOBLE CLASSICS 

Winner, 2010 AAF Greenville Silver ADDY Award

Winner, 2010 District Gold ADDY Award



**BROTHER** by LUCY NORDLINGER

## MORNING IN JUNE

BY MARGARET B. HAYES

Stilled by a gray veil  
thin as spider web,  
this day without sun  
holds its breath.

The silence—  
one feels it in the bones,  
the stillness  
in the rooms  
of this empty house,

the waiting for a death,  
and the loneliness afterward,

like the days are now,  
since you went away.

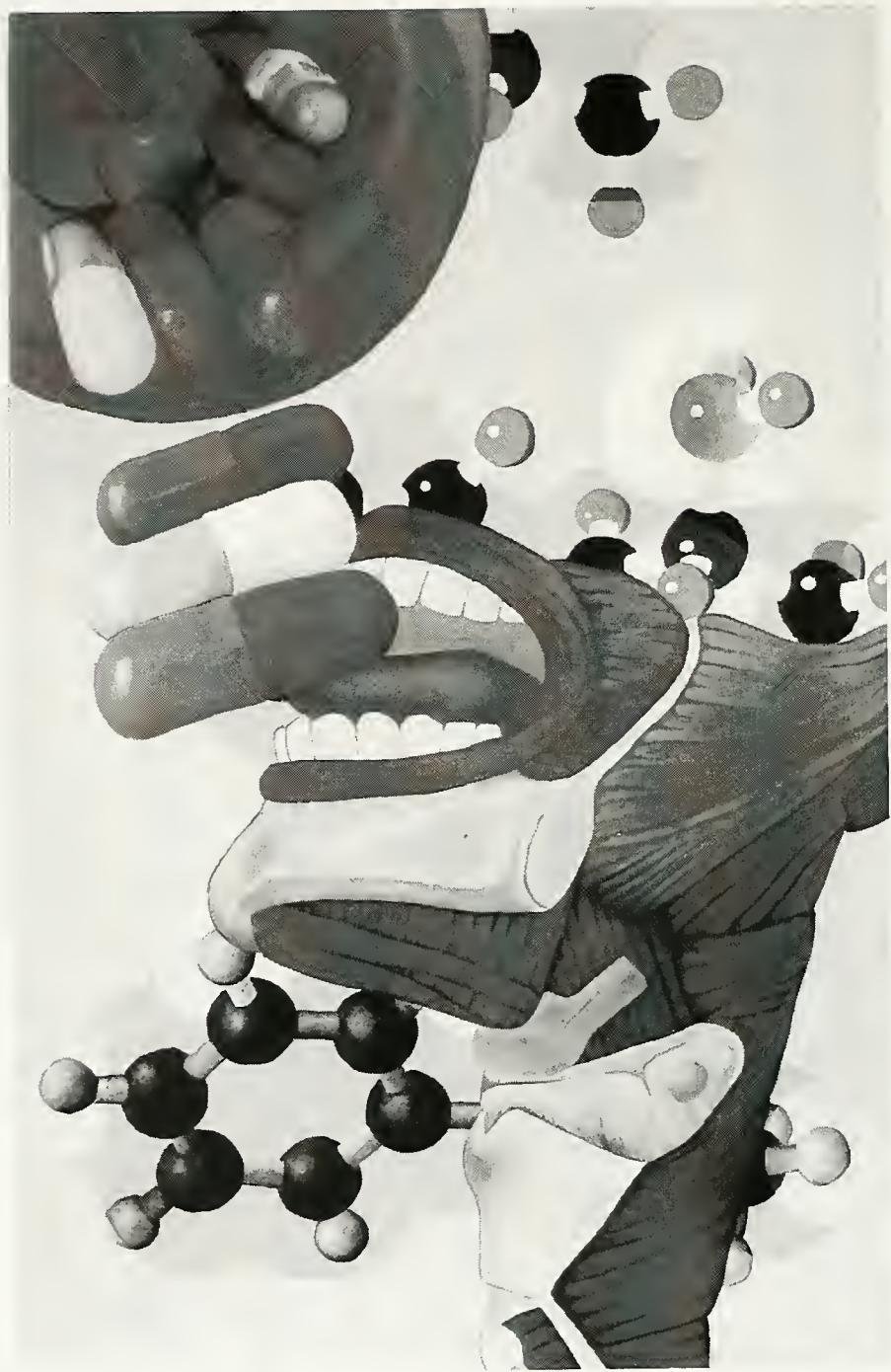


INNER JAVA BRANDING *by* MEGAN MORRIS  
Winner of Merit, 2009 AIGA Flux National Design Competition

## AUGUST 31, 1888

BY BEHAN

3:40 has come and gone in the Evil Quarter Mile  
not far from the lights of Parliament.  
The cobblestone streets, full of hovels  
crowded side by side, where love is bought  
with one stale loaf of bread at a time.  
The clicking steps of two  
have long since passed the dirty windows.  
The mingling scent of ale and sweat  
has already wafted by.  
The blood still lingers, metallic,  
a pool that envelops the dress pocket contents.  
A soaked handkerchief and broken mirror remain, nothing else.  
There are no pennies, so no justice here,  
only gas-lit lanterns reflecting off shards of glass.



PILL by WESTON FRAZOR

## CIRCULAR

BY SHAWNA FOWLER

The bracelet was simple and weak  
when I pulled apart its links.  
I wished separating from family,  
especially sisters, could be so easy.  
I shrank at being discovered,  
caught in my parents' eyes.  
"It's not about the bracelet,  
But the hate it took to do that."

## MEMOIR OF AN 11th GRADE CRUSH

BY STEVEN BAILEY

That castle is two stories with a chimney.  
The inner walls are tan and spotless,  
and the kitchen thrives with stuffed cabinets.  
Up the winding staircase to the bedrooms  
from which the scent of strawberries tempts my nose,  
Up that soft, freshened carpet I go—  
away from the Bach playing in the study  
and the wind chimes warning from the porch.  
I enter the middle room, and my eyes spot  
a pink bed with a delightfully purple canopy,  
and a grand bookshelf, crammed with adventures,  
and a dresser mirror, decorated with pictures of males,  
none of which are me, all football players,  
and my last bouquet in the white wastebasket.



GOSLON TYPE SPECIMEN BOOK BY TILLIAN JASON  
*Winner of Merit, 2009 AIGA Flux National Design Competition*

# FLEUR DE FRANCAIS



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BY JAKE DUNN

She was lovely to look at, and he loved to watch her from a distance. She was a very attractive girl, maybe twenty-two or twenty-three years old—no older. She was slender, petite, pretty. She was pretty in a way that made him want to study her face, and from a distance he did. It was soft but had very definite lines. She had strong bone structure and high cheek bones, but her face was smooth and fluid. Every line that made her, every shape that formed her, was elegant and undeniably feminine. He liked everything about her, everything except the way she painted her face.

She had dark, dark hair that fell in spiraling strands against the soft vulnerable skin of her neck. Sometimes when the sun was hot she would pull it back from her face and tie it with

her light blue silk kerchief. The blue was very pretty against her olive skin, and he liked it best when she wore it like this. He especially liked it when the weightless tresses of her dark hair would work their way free from her kerchief and become wispy vapors in the wind. When her hair was pulled back like this, it revealed her sharp brown eyes. They were strong and warm like coffee. They seemed to steal the light around them and throw it back out as if it were their own. They were very pretty, and so were her lips. They were soft and looked light, and he could tell she was not American. It was her smile that gave her away. She had a thin smile, not the full, beaming, teeth-baring smile of American girls. Americans smiled too big. Her smile was more



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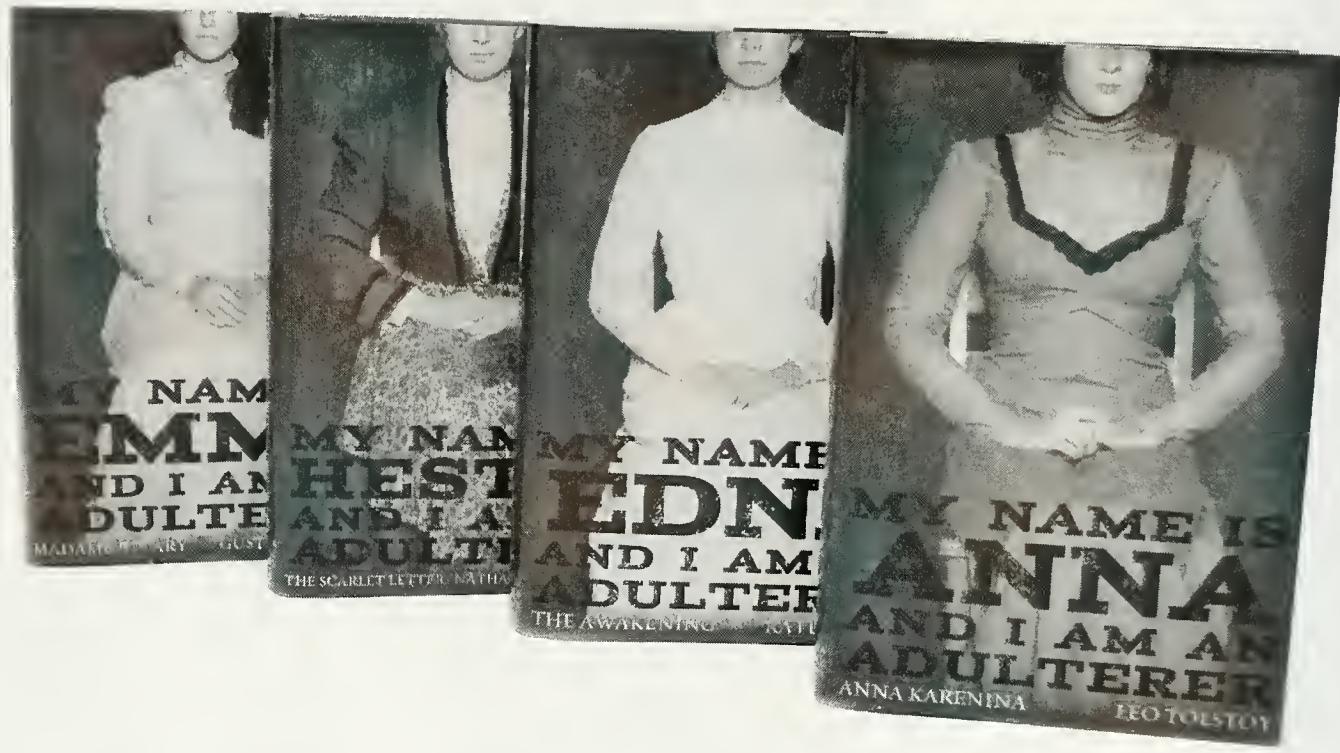
in her eyes than on her lips. It was very pleasant. He recognized it as distinctly European, and he thought she might be French. If she was French, well then, she reminded him of a wild flower growing in some sunny field of the French countryside.

She was very pretty, and he liked everything about her, except the makeup. All the other men that came to see her at the diner didn't seem to mind, but it bothered him. It bothered him that she wore it at all. She was too pretty for it. Nonetheless, he enjoyed the way she looked. He enjoyed it so much so that he looked forward to seeing her whenever he passed by her, and he passed by her nearly every day. When he did not see her, he would wonder where she was.

**ADULTERER ANONYMOUS** by KATHERINE CARTER

Winner, 2010 AAF Greenville Silver ADDY Award

Winner, 2010 District Silver ADDY Award



She worked at a small diner in the middle of the town. It was in a quaint building made of very old brick. The bricks were faded, the mortar had cracks in it, and the seams where it had been repaired over the years were visible. It had two large arching windows, smoked glass, and a single, peeling door that faced the street. On the alley side of the building was a metal staircase that climbed the wall to a small apartment. There were always men going up and down the stairs at all hours.

Fronting a cobblestone walk, its patio lined with handsome trees and crowded with wrought-iron tables, the diner bespoke a rustic beauty. In front of the dark arching windows, the tables, each with two chairs, were topped with a weave of metal, a pattern

of diagonals. The diner was on his way to work, and because of this he saw her often. In the mornings, he would see her out in front of the diner straightening the tables for two. Their dark shapes cast long beautiful shadows across the cobblestone walk and up the stacks of aged brick walls. She looked beautiful in the dawning light. He liked the way the sun wrapped around her and fell over her as she worked. Beams of light played in the leafy trees that lined the street and, as she moved through the streamlets, she seemed to be dancing. As she went from table to table tucking the chairs in and filling the crystal vases with fresh water and fresh flowers, she moved quickly. In her wake, her dress would follow in centripetal circles around her body, twisting, and turning.

as she moved through the tables like a Spanish dancer. She wore beautiful dresses that she made more beautiful by wearing, but he always wondered how she could afford them.

Some days, if he were to pass by the diner earlier than usual, he would see her walking down the cobblestone with fresh cut flowers in her hands. She cradled them in her arms and against her breasts like a baby. In some strange symbiosis, the flowers seemed to make her more beautiful, and somehow she seemed to make the flowers more beautiful. The flowers were from a shop just up the street. They were picked from the hills and meadows outside of the town. They were all wild flowers with names he didn't know. They were never roses or orchids, and this made him like her even more.

He walked by her in the mornings and in the evenings, to and from work, and sometimes he passed by her in the afternoon at lunch. He showed no obvious interest in her, except to see if she noticed him. She always did, though she was quite good at hiding it. She would only watch him in glancing looks.

She liked the way he looked. He was not exceedingly tall, but very proportional. He had an athletic build and looked sturdy and strong. His eyes were gray-blue, and soft. And they possessed a certain nakedness and vulnerability he could not hide as well as he'd like to. He had long, almost too long, hair. It had a slight curl to it and looked like something wild pretending to be tame. Yet for all this, it seemed neither wild nor tame, but in some

way an assertion of freedom. His hair was a light brown that carried the sunlight in it, and he had a soft brown beard that couldn't hide the pleasantness of his face. She liked the way he looked and was glad that his work brought him her way. She was glad to see him in the morning and in the evening, but she felt sure he did not see her. He was much too well-to-do and handsome.

Sometimes during lunch he would walk to her shop and sit down alone at one of the tables for two. He would read the paper or a book that had captured his interest, and after a rehearsed delay she would take his order. He always got a cup of coffee and whatever sandwich looked good that day; he wasn't particular. She knew this, but always asked him what he would

like anyway. He would tell her, and she would always repeat it back to him in her very attractive foreign accent. Then she would bring it out to him, and he would say thank you; she would say you're welcome, but nothing more. He was always slightly disappointed in the way she said it. It seemed so rehearsed, impersonal, as if she had gotten used to not meaning it. It made him wonder if her job and her line of work had made her that way—used to going through the motions and not meaning it. As she walked away, he would pretend to read as he watched her. She really was quite pretty, he always thought to himself.

After she had brought his sandwich and coffee and he had eaten, he would sit and smoke a cigarette, or maybe two or three,

depending on how the day was going. She would walk back and forth arranging tables, and as she cleaned she would glance at him. She was careful not to let him see her. He was handsome, she always thought, and she wondered why he wasn't married. He was well-to-do, handsome, and he seemed nice enough. It didn't make sense to her, but then she would glance at him again and wonder how he could be so nice.

They both were very discreet, something he was not usually very good at, and something she had learned from her line of work. They never let the other know they were watching, but, from time to time, at precisely the wrong time, they would both turn their eyes towards the other, and their eyes would meet. Once, he had been eating lunch and she had brought fresh flowers to his table. As she reached over him and placed them in the vase, he looked up and she looked down and their eyes met—only inches away. Blue against brown, they looked at each other in a shared second. It had startled them both and made them uncomfortable. Another time, as she poured his glass of water, the glass had fallen, shattering into pieces. As soon as it slipped from her hand, so did the words *merde merde* from her lips, affirming his assumption that she was French. He knew exactly what it meant, but in French it sounded pretty, not as it did if an American girl said the English equivalent.

As she knelt to pick up the pieces of glass, embarrassed at what she had done as well as what she had said, he bent over in his chair to help, and it happened. Their hands barely

touched, but it felt like a collision. Immediately, their hands retreated, and she said *merci*, instinctively. The fact that she had spoken French to him made her feel uncomfortable. She did not like the feeling, and, though their hands had only grazed each other, in the moment that they did, she felt a sense of intimacy in that the moment as if she had let him in to her. When she had looked at him as if to apologize, she looked right into his eyes. She looked straight into them and saw both compassion and concern. She wished he didn't care. It was always easier when they didn't care. She hated that when he had looked down at her to help her pick up the glass, his eyes had seen what she wanted him to see, what she tried to hide. The way he looked at her left a hollow burning in her, and she blamed the nakedness of his eyes. They saw the vulnerability and fear in her, but this was not the source of her discomfort. It was the fact that she could see that he cared. After he had gone, she wished it had never happened, but she still wasn't sure what had happened or if anything had happened at all. All she knew was that he had cared and it had hurt her, but she didn't know why.

For about a week after this he didn't stop by. He passed by, but never stopped. He still enjoyed seeing her, and she still enjoyed seeing him, but that was all. He wasn't sure why, but he felt strange about it too. He hadn't done anything wrong. He had just tried to help and be nice, but her reaction that day convinced him he had done something wrong.

One afternoon, after they had begun to forget about what had happened, he had stopped to eat supper before going home. When he arrived, he noticed she didn't come to take his order as she usually did. After a seemingly long time she walked out of the big door of the diner. She didn't look like herself; instead, she was a duller shade of herself. And as he looked closer, he could see that she had been crying. Rivulets of color streamed down her soft cheeks where the tears had fallen. The shadow on her eyes was smeared like soot from where she had hurriedly tried to wipe away the tears. When she saw him, she turned back and went inside. She did not want him to see her like this. Minutes later she returned. Her dark hair that had fallen from under the handkerchief was wet, and her face was clean. All of her makeup was gone; her face was naked. He was glad. It made her seem shyer, but all the more beautiful.

She sat down in the first chair she saw, her knees together, and her body turned awkwardly to the side. She stared into the street. She looked beautiful to him.

Without thinking, he spoke. He said, *You're—you're beautiful, you know that... you don't need that make up anyway... you are beautiful... you never needed it....*

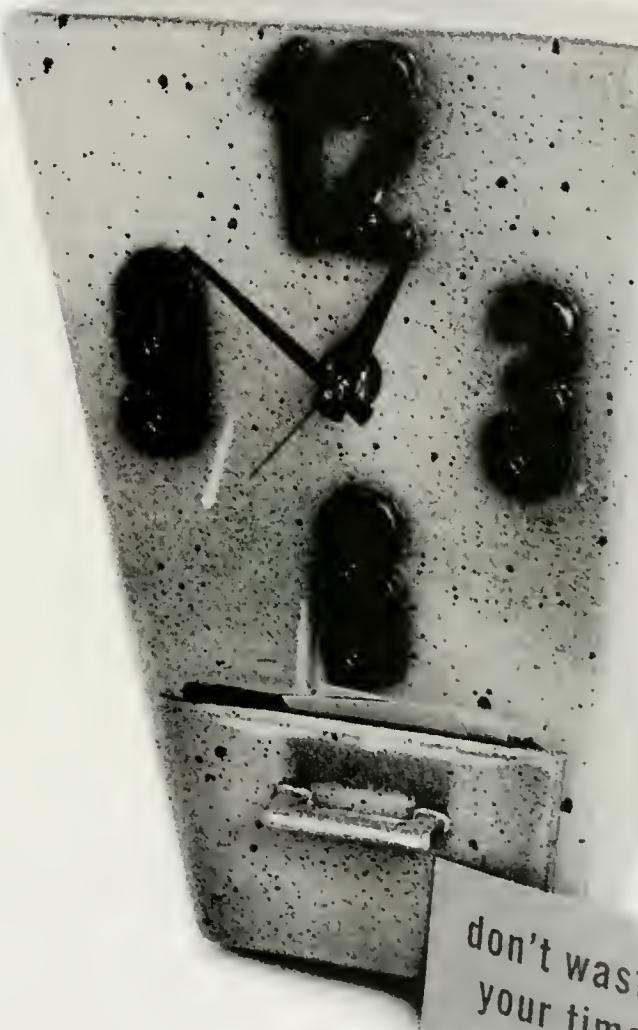
She looked up at him, forcing a smile. *Merci.* But she sounded insecure, as if what he had said were not true, or he had not meant it. She looked at him as if he must now expect something, as if she owed him for this

compliment, but he wanted nothing from her. He wanted her to know she was beautiful. He wanted her to know that she didn't need the makeup or the men that came and went from the diner to prove her beauty.

He said it again. *You are beautiful. You know that, don't you?* But he knew she didn't. She smiled, said nothing, and walked back inside. As she did, he wondered if any of those men who came to see her had ever told her that she was beautiful, and, if they had, he wondered if they had meant it. It made him mad to think a flower could grow so beautifully and never even know it.

She brought him a cup of coffee and went back to work. As she walked away, for the tiniest moment, he wanted to run after her. He wanted to tell her he was different from other men. He wanted to tell her he could make her happy. He wanted to tell her, to believe, he could love her. But the moment passed before he could will himself to do or say any of this.

She was beautiful, but he knew better. Things always looked more beautiful from a distance. Watching her in silhouette in the evening light, he had to fight to remember this. As the evening's darkness enveloped her, it became easier. As the sun sank, she faded until she became just another wild flower growing in a sunny meadow in the French countryside, just another wild flower whose name he did not know. All he knew was that it was beautiful, and that was all he wanted to know, all she needed to know. Things were easier that way.



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# SLEEP WALKING BY JOSH SORRELLS

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It's not the nicotine. I swear. It's not the nicotine. There's just something about the way that the cigarette crackles with every drag. Something about the way the cloves pop every time I inhale. That's what I'm addicted to. It's not the nicotine. I swear. It's not.

I take another drag as I step into the street. It's somewhere around three in the morning. The street's completely empty. A few streetlamps spotlight their own little private sections of the sidewalk. This place is kind of lonely.

I take a step.

Here I am, at three in the morning, walking down the middle of this street, smoking my cigarette only because I enjoy the sound of it burning.

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I take another step.

Everything around me looks dead. It's the middle of winter. The trees are completely bare, and every time the breeze blows through their limbs, it sounds like the sky is crashing down. I look up expecting to see stars. Instead, the streetlights are illuminating a sky full of clouds. Maybe it'll rain.

I'm walking now.

I take another drag, and the cigarette pops and sizzles between my fingers. My own personal fireworks show. I reach an intersection now. Torn between left or right, I just stand for a few seconds. Right here, in the middle of everything. In the middle of it all. If it were only ten o'clock maybe there would be traffic to run me over. Maybe there would be some

jackass to blow his horn at me and tell me I'm in the way. As if I didn't know I was, standing here in the middle of everything.

Let's just say I go right.

I keep walking, in the direction of nowhere. There's no agenda. There's no plan. I have absolutely no direction. I can't sleep, and I can't sit still. And so I walk.

It's so cold. I pull my jacket around me, but every time the breeze blows I can feel it blow right through me. I take another drag, hoping to light a fire somewhere inside me.

I keep walking.

A few cars rattle by. I imagine how each driver would react if I flung myself in front of them. Would they hit the brakes? Undoubtedly. But if they didn't—would they have the guts

to stay and own up to hitting me? Or would they just keep driving? Hit and run. That seems to be the trend, I think.

Ahead of me, there's a twenty-four hour convenience store. There are a few cars parked in front of it. Standing outside there are a few black men. As I get closer to the store, one of them notices me.

I must look so out of place, right? Me in my skinny jeans and pea coat. Me with my greased hair and thick-lens glasses. I don't fit in.

"Hey, bro," one of them yells as I pass the parking lot.

Maybe they'll shoot me.

"Hey, bro." They begin to follow me. "Hey, dude!"

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*“Everyone else in their beds, closer to death than they can imagine.”*

He's mocking me. Of course he is. I wonder what it would feel like. To have a piece of lead rip through my chest at three hundred miles per second.

"Hey, dude! Where you headed, man?"

They're both laughing. What a kick they must be getting out of this.

I stop. Between the men yelling at me and the sky crashing down around me, I can hear my cigarette hiss as I inhale.

"Hey, bro." They are both behind me now. "What's up, man?"

"Just taking a walk," I answer, turning around. I throw my cigarette butt on the ground. It bounces around like a fallen star before I stamp it out.

"Ah, all right," the man in front says.

If they don't shoot me, maybe they'll just beat the hell out of me.

"Look man, can we bum a couple dollars?" the second man asks. "We just trying to get some drinks."

I want to say, "I'd rather you rob me," but instead I just nod and pull my wallet out. I hand them a five dollar bill. They thank me.

I'm walking again.

Every streetlight I pass turns from red to green to yellow in a matter of seconds. The breeze rips through me.

By this time, I'm completely lost. I keep walking. I keep wishing the two men had hit me. I keep wishing they had pulled a knife out and stabbed me right in the gut. I keep wishing they had pumped me full of lead, leaving me there in the street to bleed out. I keep wondering if it would have even hurt.

To my left there's an old park with a swing set and a slide. I walk over to the swing set, pulling another cigarette from my jacket.

It's an old swing set. The chain rusted and creaky.

Picture this:

I'm seven years old. My mother has taken me to the park. I'm swinging, going as high as I can go. Pretending that I will actually make a full rotation around the bar. As I get higher, the chain begins to sag. Finally, I give it one more effort.

This is it. I'm going over the bar.

The chain sags once more, leaving slack in it. I feel like I'm floating. Like I'm flying. But then the chain catches.

I lose my grip and fall backwards out of the swing. There are a few seconds of terror as I plummet towards the ground headfirst. And then there's black.

My vision is gone. The world has disappeared. This must be what dying is like. This must be how it feels to never breathe again.

But of course, the light filters back in. And through my tears, I can see my mother's face looking into mine.

My head is cradled in her arms. She's brushing my hair out of my face and asking me if I'm okay. I nod and sob simultaneously.

My mother. She's bringing me back to life. She's bringing me back from the dead. My mother, she tells me she loves me. She tells me that I'm going to be okay. And I believe her.

I light my cigarette, listening to the tobacco

snap as it catches flame. I'm addicted to this.

I sit down on the swing and take a drag.

I start to swing back and forth. Maybe this time I could make it all the way around. Maybe this time, since I know about the slack in the chain now, I could time it just right. Maybe this time I won't fall out.

Grow up.

I get out of the swing and walk towards the street again. A car passes by, slowing down as it sees my silhouette approaching from the park.

I step into the street.

I hear a dog bark somewhere in front of me. And I walk.

Picture this:

I'm twelve years old.

Downstairs, I can hear my mother screaming at my father. I can hear the anger in her voice. I can feel the blow of every word.

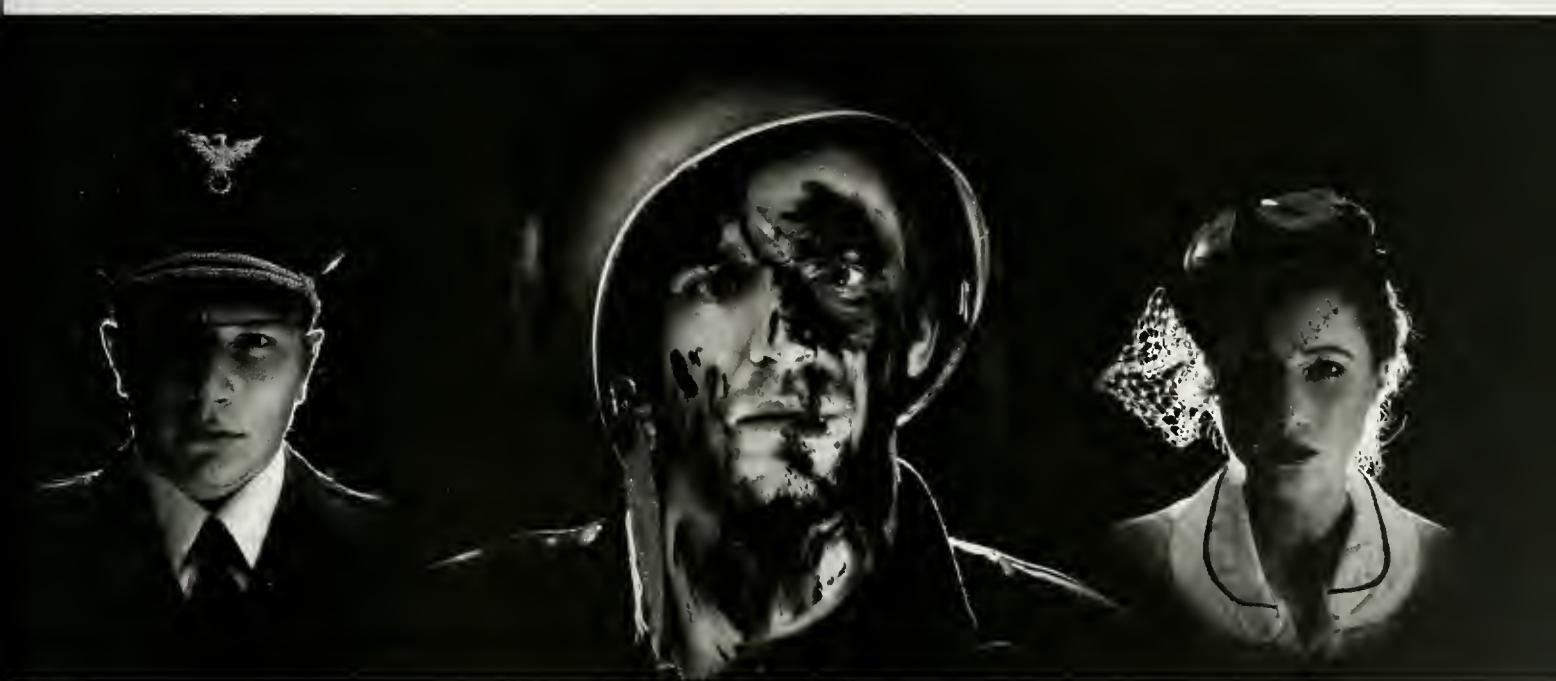
"How could you?" she screams. "How could you, John? How could you throw this family away like that?"

My father stays silent. He never answers.

I can see him, standing there in the kitchen. His head hanging on his neck. His eyes directed towards the ground. Standing there like a coward as my mother screams at him. As my mother pleads with him. As she begs him.

"What were you thinking? John! You have a family! What were you thinking?"

I hear my mother move across the room, pushing a chair out of her way. I can hear them both struggling. My beloved mother, she is pounding away at my father with her fists.



A SOLDIER'S MENTALITY

DREW HOPE

And he catches every blow with his hands.

As I sit in my room upstairs, my mother begins to sob. She's fallen to her knees at my father's feet. And she is sobbing. My beloved mother weeps.

As she sobs, I begin to sob.

"How—how could—John," my mother chokes on her words.

My father, his eyes are full of tears. His face is full of guilt. It is full of regret.

I'm upstairs, but I know. I know that my father hates himself right now. I can hear it in his silence.

He picks my mother up from the ground and holds her. She cries even harder into his shoulder.

"I love you," she whispers.

It's pathetic how empty this street is.

I keep walking. My hands are numb now. The cold air is beginning to eat away at my body. I feel my chest shake violently, trying to warm itself. I breathe in smoke, but it's not the same as fire.

As I walk, I begin to realize just how lonely the world is at four in the morning. A cat darts across the street in front of me. The sky crashes down through the trees. I shiver because of it.

Looking around me, I realize that I'm the only one out here. I'm the only one awake.

I'm the only one alive at this moment.

Everyone else is in their beds, closer to death than they can imagine.

Their breathing has shortened. Their hearts almost at a complete standstill. Their minds even have taken a break. There are no dreams. There are no thoughts. Everyone but me right now. They are closer to death than they'd ever want to be.

And God, how I wish it could be me.

As I walk down this street I remember how my mother used to take me on walks when I was younger. We would walk down one street and the next, the whole way my mother telling me how, if I wandered off too far, the devil would catch me. And how there was no way she could save me.

I would always stay within two steps of her.

And as we walked, my mother would tell me of how, when she was a child, she would always try to walk home backwards from school. She would tell me how she tried to count each step and make sure that it would always take her four thousand and sixteen steps from the last

step of the schoolhouse to the first step of her house. Then she would laugh.

She would laugh because she was lying. And I would laugh too.

Whenever my mother and I would walk down the street, she would take me to the ice cream stand. She would get Rocky Road, and I would get Chocolate Mint. And we would race to see who could get a brain freeze first.

A car rumbles past me.

The sun is starting to light up the overcast sky. There are purples and oranges creeping through the clouds.

The silence of the night is starting to trickle out.

There are the sounds of the birds as they wake up. The sounds of the cars as men and women rush to work. Here I am. Walking.

I begin to wonder what it would be like if, on this morning, no one woke up.

What if life just stopped? Time just froze?

I find myself in the middle of another intersection. This time there is traffic. I don't wait for a jackass to blow his horn. I hop onto the sidewalk and begin walking down another street.

As the sun rises, everything around me seems to gain more color. There are houses on my left. Their windows are glowing as families wake up and begin their days. The houses themselves seem to come to life.

I keep walking.

When I was sixteen, my family took a vacation to Nashville. It was my mother's favorite city.

As we walked down Broadway, I remember how my mother would get excited at all the shops selling cowboy boots.

I remember the first pair she ever bought me.

My father would get so annoyed at how she would take us into every single shop and make us watch her try on every single dress with a different pair of boots every time.

I thought it was so funny how much it annoyed my father. She would laugh at him. She would flirt with him.

I remember the way she would kiss him after each outfit and tell him that he was her country star.

She was a teenager all over again.

She was so happy. My mother.

I light another cigarette.

God knows where I am. A school bus full of kids zooms by me. I take a drag just

to hear it burn.

I begin to wonder to myself how people can still go about their days. How they can still wake up and go through their routine.

Ahead of me, I see the same twenty-four hour convenience store. A complete circle. Of course.

I walk by the store where I had encountered the two black men. I take a left down the street that leads to my apartment.

The sun is beginning to warm the air up. I can feel my hands. As I approach my apartment building, my stomach begins to turn over. Tears well up in my eyes.

Here, in the middle of the street, I begin to sob.

I fall to my knees and I sob.

I cry like I've never cried before.

I pound my fists against my head. I scream.

I tear at my clothes and pull my hair. I lose all composure.

For what seems like hours, I cry.

I weep. I lament.

Finally, I gain control of myself and stand up.

At this moment, I feel my phone vibrate in my pants pocket.

It's my sister. I answer it.

"Hello?"

Pause.

"Yeah, Dad called late last night," I say into the receiver. "Yeah—he said she hanged herself."

Picture this:

My mother, she's standing in the front yard. On her head is a yellow straw hat. The kind that blocks out the sun.

She's standing there, in the front yard, in her sundress and her hands on her hips. She's standing there, smiling from ear to ear.

"How do I look?" she yells at me.

"Like a flower!" I yell back. "Like a huge sunflower!"

"Do you think Daddy will like it?"

"Of course he will!" I answer her. "He'll love it!"

She twirls around in a circle, the dress hem flowing around her, constantly trying to keep up with the motion of her body. She's spinning in a circle, there in the front yard, laughing at herself. She's opening up, the dress expanding from her body with each rotation. She's blooming. Blooming like a flower.

"He'll love it!" I yell at her as I run through the grass to join her. "He'll love it."



TELL THE PEOPLE YOU LOVE HOW MUCH THEY MEAN TO YOU © KODAK 1988

## CONVERSATION BY EMBERS

BY JESÉ ALBANTAR JR.

The night is still young, the moon has yet to settle.  
The logs we sit on ask us to leave, and we  
respect their wishes, move down to the ground.

The earth is cold, its sweat cooling down.  
The shivers down your spine move you closer to me,  
outstretching my arms; you slide right in  
my coat, now our coat, keeping us warm.

Dying flames light our conversation and weigh down the mood.  
A shift in the sleeping bags reminds us of the boys. We see illuminated  
heads and curled-up shapes of small bodies. They deflate with every exhale.  
The earth is now restless. We go our separate ways.

The horses have grazed this part of the world away.  
Our time spent together has left an imprint on the ground.  
Once the sun is up, we all get together, grasshoppers for breakfast.  
I search for our memories left on the ground. I wonder who will see.



HOMER

## NOUN/VERB

BY KATHRYN WHITE

We were the horizon demanders; we  
were the sailors, the stargazers, lovers  
of all that glittered and was new. Plenty  
bound me to you. We yearned to discover  
what locked our hearts and spurred our restless feet.  
I abandon nouns like a snake its skin—  
People, places, things can't hold me. The pleat  
in your pants, a red mailbox—the sudden  
nausea of routine. I can't pretend  
I'll keep myself content enough to stay.  
Don't you know a birch tree can only bend  
so far? My love dwindle<sup>s</sup> every day.  
I've exhausted your landscape, and I know  
your old cities—they're pushing me to go.



BEAUTY by MELANIE S'ALICE

*Winner of Merit, 2009 AIGA Flux National Design Competition*



## TO THE FAIREST

BY BETHANY WADE

Discord sits,  
her anger smoldering red,  
uninvited to the gathering.

Love, Wisdom, and Marriage wait.  
The golden apple falls.  
Who decides the victor?

Bribed by beauty,  
the choice is made.  
Vengeance on Love is sweet.

Discord sits,  
her smile widening,  
as the war now wages.

## **NIGHTTIME BY THE LAKE**

BY BRENNNA DAVIS

What I meant to tell you last night, you sweet man, was  
that I saw you run down to the shore, past the hanging  
clothes that have yet to be folded, and beneath the pine tree.

Stopping to pull the pinecone from my head, and searching for you,  
I slid into the hollow canoe, thinking silently of your mistakes!

What seriousness and no laughter! Your face burning  
my eyes! Holes filled with spiders! Birds in the gilded cage,  
blankets over the chairs!—and you, darling, why  
did that woman yell at you down by the water's edge?



HOUSE CHANNAH W. S. CO.

## AS NOMADS

BY JOSH SORRELLS

Now, across the bridges and through tunnels until we both  
stop, we've seen the world  
all as it should be.

Where are we now? We don't care—lost?

Yes, let's hope for that. Crush the compass  
and burn the maps; I've heard home  
is where the heart is.

Let's test that cliché, shall we? Direction? That's a crutch  
we've limped on for far too long.  
Walk freely—run even.

Wherever we are in this world, separated or not,  
we are together, home sweet home,  
all as it should be.



GREEN CAT © KATIE KELLY  
Winner, 2010 AAF Greenville Gold ADDY Award

# LITERARY STAFF



**Dr. Teresa Jones**

**LITERARY ADVISOR**

Teresa Jones has flown down hillsides on handlebars. Such trust, she says, is freeing and akin to being blind and reason enough to "love insanely" (Forough Farrokhzad).



**Kathryn White**

**EDITOR**

When she was six, Kathryn named her two big toes Henry and Elizabeth. They were married, and the other eight toes were their children. She hasn't changed much since then. She likes dry toast, freckles on shoulders, and the smell of old books.



**Steven Bailey**

**ASSISTANT EDITOR**

Steven Bailey does not have a wife and kids, but he does have a violin. As a lover of language and stage, he often grapples to complete his daily work, as his printer often runs out of ink.



**Josh Sorrells**

**ASSISTANT EDITOR**

Josh Sorrells enjoys a laugh as much as the next guy. But sometimes he wonders why the next guy is laughing.



**Anna Marie Davis**

**ASSISTANT EDITOR**

Anna Marie Davis—a palindrome, never odd or even.



**Brianne Holmes**

**ASSISTANT EDITOR**

Brianne Holmes firmly believes that "even the smallest person can change the course of the future."

# DESIGN STAFF



Jennifer Hall

---

PRINT STAFF

Every piece of furniture in Jennifer Hall's home was purchased at the Red House.



Laura Jones

---

WEB STAFF

Nap enthusiast  
Laura Jones dreams of living in a world of bacon and lowercase letterforms.



Prof. Tim Speaker

---

ART DIRECTOR

Even in the hottest weather, Tim is rarely seen without a dress shirt, a blazer, and a full cup of coffee. Though from the magnificent post-industrial city of Saginaw, MI, he has conquered his fears and is now a master of southern living.



Melanie Smalley

---

WEB STAFF

A pint size ball of genius and smiles, Melanie enjoys finding solutions to problems, studying the masters of art, and curling up in a sunny spot for a nap.



Kelly Johnson

---

PRINT EDITOR

Though she should have graduated a century ago, Kelly Johnson has made the most of her time in college by minoring in everything and majoring in awesome.



Beth Cooper

---

PRINT STAFF

Beth Cooper has mastered the art of drawing hand turkeys on the backs of tests.



Katherine Carter

---

WEB STAFF

When not designing, Kat jams out to mad techno beats and often threatens to punch people in the face.



Jivan Davé

---

PRINT STAFF

Everything about Jivan, including his middle name—Dupree—is gangsta.



Andrew Higgins

---

WEB STAFF

Andrew thinks that in order to breathe fire, one must first accept the taste of gasoline.



Megan Morris

---

PRINT STAFF

Megan enjoys checking out all of the books in the library that you need when you have a paper due.



Cameron Ridenour

---

PRINT DESIGN LEAD

Cameron has a strong argument for why kerning is the ultimate metal activity. To find out more, email him at wridenour87@gmail.com.

---

Chris Waldrop

---

WEB EDITOR

When Chris Waldrop is not riding translucent steeds through the mists of Avalon, he adores riding on the backs of winged serifs and controlling wild beasts with his mind.





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